

Statistics Weekly

Thursday, 28 June 1990

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Car sales down as luxury boom eases

Motor vehicle sales suffered a setback in April, with imported luxury models leading the way down.

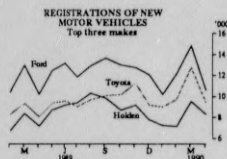
Registrations of the top five European cars had jumped by 108 per cent in March following the announcement of an extra 20 per cent sales tax to apply to high priced cars from May. However in April, registrations of these models fell by 30.4 per cent (610 cars) from the March level.

Registrations of all motor vehicles fell by 23.9 per cent in original terms between March and April 1990. After seasonal adjustment the decline was still a significant 6.2 per cent, but the trend series recorded the fifth monthly rise in succession — at 1.6 per cent. Total registrations in April were 15.6 per cent more than in April 1989 in seasonally adjusted terms.

New registrations for the top five makes of all motor vehicles fell 12,365 to 38,311 in April, a fall of 24.4 per cent from March. The top five makes all recorded a decrease. Ford recorded the biggest decrease, 4,231 registrations, followed by Toyota (3,360), Nissan (1,945), Mitsubishi (1,614) and Holden (1,215). The remaining makes recorded 2,523 fewer registrations in April than in March.

The top five makes of all motor vehicles shared 81 per cent of the market in April, their share having decreased monthly since December 1989, when they accounted for 84.4 per cent. In April, Ford claimed 22.4 per cent, Toyota 19.8 per cent, Holden 17.5 per cent, Mitsubishi 11.1 per cent and Nissan 10.1 per cent.

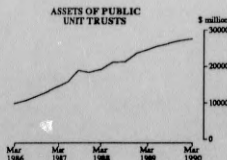
For further information, order the publication *Motor Vehicle Registrations, Australia* (9303.0), or contact Kevin Yeardon on (06) 252 6255.



Public unit trusts continue to grow

Most types of public unit trusts have continued to attract investors despite strong competition for investment funds and some recent negative publicity. Unit trusts allow small investors to invest in the property, equity and mortgage markets.

As the graph shows, total assets of public unit trusts (excluding cash management trusts) have increased steadily since 1985. Over the year ended March 1990 assets increased by \$2,990 million or 12.1 per cent to reach \$27,603 million.



Property trusts are the largest asset holders among public unit trusts. In March quarter 1989 they had assets of \$15,524 million or 63.1 per cent of the assets of the public unit trust industry. By March quarter 1990 their assets had grown to \$17,771 million and their share of the industry had increased to 64.4 per cent.

International equity trusts and 'other trusts' have grown significantly over the past year. Domestic equity trust assets declined sharply in the March quarter. International equity trusts are now challenging domestic equity trusts as the second largest type of trust.

The public unit trust industry is currently undergoing a period of rationalisation resulting in a reduction in the number of trust managers. Many smaller trusts have ceased operating or have been acquired by larger management organisations.

PUBLIC UNIT TRUSTS, MARCH QUARTER 1990

Trust type	Number of trusts	Total assets (\$m)	Percentage change in assets on		Market share (%)
			Previous quarter	Corresponding quarter last year	
Property	122	17,771	0.9	14.5	64.4
Domestic equity	149	2,680	-8.6	-8.1	9.7
International equity	69	2,600	2.0	27.2	9.4
Mortgage	28	2,319	-1.6	0.8	8.4
Trading	8	1,166	0.9	-15.8	4.2
Other	48	1,067	80.2	139.1	3.9
Total	424	27,603	1.5	12.1	100.0

For further information, order the publication *Public Unit Trusts, Australia*, (5645.0), or contact John Hyland on (06) 252 5384.

Road freight movement drops

Total interstate road freight moved by major operators during the March quarter 1990 was 18.9 per cent lower than the December quarter 1989 and 5.7 per cent lower than in the March quarter 1989.

The 2.04 million tonnes moved in the March quarter was the lowest recorded total since the June quarter 1985.

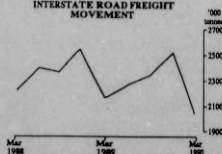
Decreases in freight originating and received were recorded for most major centres. While the March quarter tends to be a low quarter for freight movement, a number of respondents reported that industrial action during this period had further affected their activities.

INTERSTATE ROAD FREIGHT MOVEMENT, MARCH QUARTER 1990

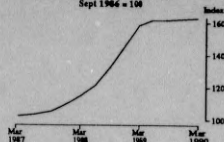
	Road freight originating		Road freight received	
	Thousand tonnes	Percentage change on previous quarter	Thousand tonnes	Percentage change on previous quarter
Sydney	484	-12.0	479	-23.3
Melbourne	514	-22.5	599	-10.5
Brisbane	212	-10.9	248	-25.2
Adelaide	205	-25.5	236	-19.7
Perth	41	-44.1	51	-41.7
Canberra	24	-1.1	103	7.8
All other centres	563	-18.9	327	-21.6
Total	2,043	-18.9	2,043	-18.9

For further information, order the publication *Interstate Road Freight Movement, Australia* (9214.0), or contact Andy Harris on (06) 252 5443.

INTERSTATE ROAD FREIGHT MOVEMENT



ESTABLISHED HOUSE PRICES
Sept 1986 = 100



Established house prices remain stable ...

Prices of established houses in the capital cities rose by 0.5 per cent in March quarter. This represents a slight increase on the 0.4 per cent rise last quarter, and a continuation of relatively stable prices for the third consecutive quarter.

ESTABLISHED HOUSE PRICES, MARCH QUARTER 1990
Percentage change

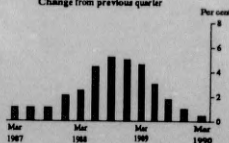
	From previous quarter	From corresponding quarter of previous year
Sydney	1.0	-1.6
Melbourne	-0.6	2.7
Brisbane	3.2	12.6
Adelaide	-1.5	7.7
Perth	-0.5	7.6
Hobart	0.2	6.7
Darwin	2.6	-1.7
Canberra	0.4	5.0
Weighted average of eight capital cities	0.5	2.8

... while growth in project home prices eases

Project home prices rose by 0.6 per cent in March quarter — the lowest quarterly rise since the series commenced in September quarter 1986.

All cities except Sydney and Canberra had lower increases than in the previous quarter. Perth prices fell for the third quarter in a row.

PROJECT HOME PRICES
Change from previous quarter



PROJECT HOME PRICES, MARCH QUARTER 1990
Percentage change

	From previous quarter	From corresponding quarter of previous year
Sydney	1.5	6.8
Melbourne	0.6	8.4
Brisbane	1.3	9.0
Adelaide	0.6	4.3
Perth	-2.3	1.9
Hobart	1.0	7.2
Darwin	5.5	22.3
Canberra	1.8	8.5
Weighted average of eight capital cities	0.6	6.9

Retired Australians rely on government pensions ... intentions shift to super

An estimated 2.6 million Australians have retired from full-time work with 1.6 million of these having retired at age 45 or more. Of the 1.6 million, over one million, or 63 per cent, say their main source of income is a government pension of some kind.

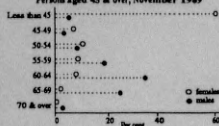
This was one of the main findings of the ABS survey of retirement and retirement intentions, covering people aged 45 and over, conducted in November 1989.

The survey found major differences between the main source of income for those who had retired at age 45 and over and the expected main source for the 1.5 million people intending to retire.

Only 9 per cent of those who had retired at age 45 and over reported superannuation and other retirement schemes as their main source of income. However, 30 per cent of those intending to retire expected super or other retirement schemes to be their main source of income.

Of those intending to retire, 30 per cent expected government pensions to be their main source of income.

AGE AT RETIREMENT AS A PROPORTION OF THOSE WHO HAD RETIRED
Persons aged 45 & over, November 1989



MAIN SOURCE OF INCOME IN RETIREMENT FROM FULL-TIME WORK
PERSONS AGED 45 AND OVER
November 1989

Source of income	Retired at age 45 and over		Intending to retire	
	Number '000	Per cent	Number '000	Per cent
Superannuation and other retirement schemes	147.5	9.1	471.6	29.8
Invalid, age, supporting parent's, widow's pension	812.6	50.5	469.7	29.6
War disability, repat, service, war widow's pension	202.4	12.6	11.2	0.7
Investments (interest, stocks, etc)	196.3	12.2	207.1	13.1
Savings, sale of assets	38.6	2.4	80.8	5.1
Part-time work	57.2	3.5	63.3	4.0
Someone else's income	123.6	7.7	116.4	7.4
Other	31.8	2.0	17.8	1.1
Did not know	—	—	146.5	9.2
Total	1,610.0	100.0	1,584.5	100.0

As the graph shows, males generally retire from full-time work at an older age than females. For females, 60 per cent retired from full-time work before the age of 45, compared with only 6 per cent of males. The highest proportion of males (60%) retired between the ages of 60 and 69.

For further information, order the publication *Retirement and Retirement Intentions, Australia* (6238.0), or contact Cheryl Trussler on (06) 252 6661.

Inquiries

The ABS supplies a wide range of statistical information:

- through its bookshops
- by mail order (including subscription)
- by facsimile
- electronically.

To order any of the publications that appear in *Statistics Weekly* or to inquire about the statistics and services available from the ABS, contact Information Services at any of the offices listed below. An Information Consultancy Service in each office provides assistance of a more extensive or complex nature.

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All the week's releases: 20 to 26 June

General

Statistics Weekly, 21 June 1990 (1318.0; \$3.50)

New South Wales Year Book, 1990 (1300.1; \$26.95)

Economic Indicators, WA, June 1990 (1307.5; \$5.00)

Social statistics

Correctional Services, Tas., 1988-89 (4503.6; \$8.00)

National accounts, finance and foreign trade

Australian National Accounts: State Accounts, 1988-89 (5220.0; \$17.50)

Personal Finance, Aust., April 1990 (5642.0; \$5.00)

Public Unit Trusts, Aust., March Qtr 1990 (5645.0; \$8.00)

Labour statistics and prices

Retirement and Retirement Intentions, Aust., November 1989 (6238.0; \$8.00)

Price Indexes of Copper Materials, Aust., May 1990 (6410.0; \$3.50)

Price Indexes of Materials Used in Coal Mining, Aust., April 1990 (6415.0; \$5.00)

House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities, March Qtr 1990 (6416.0; \$25.00)

Secondary industry and distribution

Production of Building Materials and Fittings, Aust., March 1990 (8361.0; \$5.50)

Production of Paper, Plastics, Paints, Industrial Chemicals and Detergents, Aust., March 1990 (8362.0; \$5.50)

Tourist Accommodation: Hotels and Motels, ACT, March Qtr 1990 (8635.8; \$4.00)

Transport

Interstate Road Freight Movement, Aust., March Qtr 1990 (9214.0; \$5.00)

Motor Vehicle Registrations, Aust., April 1990 (9303.0; \$9.00)

Calendar of key releases

Expected releases over the fortnight to 10 July 1990

June

- 27** Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities, April 1990 (6407.0; \$9.00)
 Import Price Index, Australia, March Quarter 1990 (6414.0; \$5.00)
 Production Statistics, Australia, Preliminary, May 1990 (8301.0; \$5.00)
 Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Australia, Preliminary, May 1990 (9301.0, \$4.00)
- 28** Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia, April 1990 (5609.0; \$8.00)
 Export Price Index, Australia, April 1990 (6405.0, \$5.00)
 Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Australia, April 1990 (6411.0, \$8.50)
 Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Australia, April 1990 (6412.0, \$6.00)
- 29** Balance of Payments, Australia, May 1990 (5301.0; \$12.00)

July

- 4** Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia, February 1990 (6302.0; \$8.50)
 Job Vacancies and Overtime, Australia, May 1990 (6354.0; \$10.00)
 Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra, April 1990 (6408.0; \$3.75)
 Building Approvals, Australia, May 1990 (8731.0, \$8.50)
- 9** Private New Capital Expenditure, Australia, Actual and Expected Expenditure, March Quarter 1990 Survey (5626.0; \$8.50)

The latest ...

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to
 26 June 1990



Statistics Weekly
 28 June 1990

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
— Percentage change from same period previous year —									
New capital expenditure (Dec. qtr 89)*	0.6	5.0	27.4	24.3	-6.9	-34.5	n.a.	n.a.	4.4
Retail turnover (Apr. 90) (trend estimate)	8.8	4.5	7.9	5.7	6.6	9.6	n.a.	8.8	6.9
New motor vehicle registrations (Apr. 90)*	-2.1	56.8	3.8	30.3	-1.4	n.a.	-4.0	16.7	15.6
Number of dwelling unit approvals (Apr. 90)	-25.4	-38.7	-28.3	-11.5	-55.8	-18.4	7.6	-10.6	-32.5
Value of total building work done (Dec. qtr)	20.3	13.7	15.6	23.4	24.1	9.1	15.9	5.6	17.6
Employed persons (May 90)*	1.8	2.3	3.7	2.4	2.0	5.0	-2.1	3.7	2.4
Capital city consumer price index (Mar. qtr 90)	9.1	8.7	7.8	6.9	9.1	7.2	6.2	8.3	8.6
Average weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time) (November 89)	7.9	6.8	3.7	6.9	6.4	4.7	2.6	4.6	6.6
Population (Dec. 89)	0.9	1.3	3.1	1.1	2.8	0.9	-0.1	2.2	1.6
Guest nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc (Sept. qtr 89)	-8.5	19.0	-24.5	13.8	4.5	-6.6	2.1	-6.7	-7.9

* Seasonally adjusted for States (but not Territories)

			Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on		
			Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year	
Period							
National production							
Gross domestic product	— current prices	\$m	Mar. qtr 90	89,263	94,113	2.3	9.8
	— 1984-85 prices			62,050	65,441	1.8	4.4
Industrial activity							
New capital expenditure	— current prices	\$m	Mar. qtr 90	6,163	6,947	- 2.9	- 3.0
	— 1984-85 prices			4,631	5,209	- 4.3	- 8.7
Expected new capital expenditure		"	Three months to June 90	8,170	n.a.	n.a.	- 2.7
Retail turnover	— current prices	"	Apr. 90	6,618	7,104	1.6	7.7
	— 1984-85 prices	"	Mar. qtr 90	14,013	14,836	0.0	1.4
New motor vehicle registrations (e)		no.	Apr. 90	47,284	53,976	- 6.2	15.6
Dwelling unit approvals		"	"	9,993	11,231	- 5.9	- 27.4
Value of all building approvals		\$m	"	1,853	1,988	0.6	- 19.6
Value of total building work done	— current prices	"	Dec. qtr 89	8,109	7,741	- 0.4	17.7
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	5,248	5,010	- 2.3	6.5
Manufacturers' sales		"	Mar. qtr 90	33,133	36,124	2.4	8.3
Expected manufacturers' sales		"	Three months to June 90	36,461	n.a.	n.a.	6.3
Labour							
Employed persons		'000	May 90	7,916.1	7,903.1	0.5	2.4
Unemployment rate †		%	"	6.5	6.5	0.3	0.3
Participation rate †		"	"	64.0	63.8	0.4	0.5
Job vacancies		'000	Feb. 90	60.9	56.1	- 15.0	- 15.9
Average weekly overtime per employee		hours	"	1.4	1.4	- 8.7	- 3.5
Prices, profits and wages							
Consumer price index	1980-81 = 100.0	Mar. qtr 90	204.1	n.a.	1.7	8.6	
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industries (f)	1984-85 = 100.0	Mar. 90	121.5	n.a.	0.6	5.7	
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry (f)	1968-69 = 100.0	Mar. 90	567.8	n.a.	0.9	6.6	
Company profits before income tax		\$m	Mar. qtr 90	3,668	4,633	9.0	2.0
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)		\$	Feb. 90	524.80	n.a.	1.6	6.6
Interest rates (b) (monthly average)							
90-day bank bills †		% per annum	Apr. 90	15.05	n.a.	- 0.4	- 2.2
10-year Treasury bonds †		"	"	13.80	n.a.	0.4	0.4
Balance of payments							
Exports of merchandise		\$m	Apr. 90	4,181	4,115	6.2	2.6
Imports of merchandise		"	"	3,777	4,047	- 8.7	- 6.4
Balance on merchandise trade (c)		"	"	404	68	n.a.	n.a.
Balance of goods and services (c)		"	"	89	- 279	70.5	54.9
Balance on current account (c)		"	"	- 1,018	- 1,417	35.2	15.2
Terms of trade (d)	1984-85 = 100.0	Mar. qtr 90	n.a.	104.0	- 4.9	- 6.1	
Foreign investment							
Net foreign debt		\$m	31 Mar. 90	123,570	n.a.	5.3	15.3
Net foreign liabilities		"	"	163,453	n.a.	2.8	17.5
Exchange rates (monthly average)							
US\$	per \$A	Apr. 90	0.7641	n.a.	1.1	- 5.0	
Trade weighted index	May 1970 = 100.0	"	60.6	n.a.	1.8	- 0.5	
Other indicators							
Population (resident at end of qtr)	million	Dec. 89	16.9	n.a.	0.4	1.6	
Overseas visitors	'000	Mar. 90	189	179	2.0	9.1	

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for exports to that for imports. (e) Later figures released Wednesday, 27 June 1990. (f) Later figures released Thursday, 28 June 1990.
NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.

Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 6). Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

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